

Bosnia

Q. Sir, do you know any more information on the soldier who was wounded in Bosnia?

The President. Our reports are sketchy, and I have tried to get an update, but what I do know is that there were apparently two vehicles and four soldiers involved. Only one was seriously hurt, and he has been medevaced to Croatia, in a hospital there, and we understand he's in stable condition.

But mines have always been our biggest concern, and we're working very hard on it, but that's what happened. And we'll continue to monitor it and do the best we can. The mission itself is going very well. The people have received our soldiers very well, and I'm very well satisfied with the progress. And I'm obviously very sorry this happened, but they're making good progress on the mine problem, but it's going to be difficult to get rid of them all.

Budget Negotiations

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*the measure to get the workers back that's going to get through Congress?

Senator Dole. Well, it passed the House. We hope we can pass it in the Senate today, so make some progress.

Senator Daschle. We tried to pass a clean CR, one without any conditions. And that was objected to, but I hope we can work something out.

Q. But isn't the fact now that the Democrats are holding things up?

Senator Daschle. Not at all. As a matter of fact, as I said, we passed a continuing resolution—we had no conditions. It sent people back to work, and that was objected to. So we're not trying to hold anything up here. We hope we can get some sort of an agreement as early as today.

Q. Well, what's it going to take to get a deal?

Speaker Gingrich. Well, let me just say something. I think the President had a right—we're glad to have you all in. We have a lot of work to do. We made, I thought, real progress last night. It is not easy. We have very significant areas we have to work on, but I thought the spirit was very positive. We don't just want to get the Federal workers back, we want to get them paid. And in

order to do that, I think we've got to get this whole thing worked out. But I thought we had a great start last night. And with you all's permission, I think we can get a lot more done in the next few hours.

Q. Mr. President, is the message from the Democrats basically that they don't trust you?

The President. We've got to go to work. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Spec. Martin J. Begosh, USA, wounded when his vehicle hit a land mine in Bosnia on December 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders December 31, 1995

Budget Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, are you close to a deal today?

The President. Let me tell you where we are today. We had a very long discussion yesterday. We discussed almost all the issues where we had differences on our plans financially, in terms of the dollars. And this morning we're going to have an extensive discussion of the Medicare policy. And then we're going to give our staffs some instruction. We're going to meet again on Tuesday, and we're going to do our best to work through this and come to an accord.

My New Year's wish is that we'll get this balanced budget plan, and we'll do it in a way that protects the things that we care about, the Medicare, the Medicaid, the education and environment, the other issues. And we've been working at it. I've been very well pleased, and I think we've been somewhat successful because we haven't said very much about it. We've just got to keep working until we reach an accord.

Q. Mr. President, will you touch on—[*inaudible*]*—*negotiations—

Q. Will you leave town today without reopening the Government, of the three—

Speaker Gingrich. I'm sure we'll be talking about that, that's one of the things we

want to get done and get agreed to. So we're trying to work out how to get the Federal employees back to work. We'd also like to get them paid. I think that's an integral part of getting them back to work. But as the President said, I think, frankly, most of our success so far has been that we've been in this room talking with each other and not getting involved in negotiating in public, and I think we've made a lot of progress.

Q. To follow on that, sir, is it healthy to have the House Speaker talking on CNN yesterday on the——

Speaker Gingrich. Oh, that is nonsense. I told the President on Friday that I was so favorable about him in answering their big question on "Evans & Novak" that I thought he'd want to see it. The fact is we're working very well together. I was asked a question about the campaign next year, and I suspect if you ask Mr. Gephardt or Vice President Gore about how they'll campaign next year, they'll give you similar answers. We're negotiating very well from a Government standpoint in here, and I think we have a lot to be proud of. Our New Year's wish ought to be that we get this done and give the American people a balanced budget and the Government paid for and back to work.

Senator Dole. The Senate is going to meet at noon; we'll try to pass something to help the Federal employees.

Q. Are you closer?

Senator Dole. Oh, we're about 6 feet apart. [Laughter]

Senator Daschle. We'll be a lot closer in a couple of hours. [Laughter]

The President. We're working at it steady. Happy New Year everybody.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:50 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on the Death of Admiral Arleigh A. Burke

January 1, 1996

We mourn the passing today of Adm. Arleigh A. Burke, U.S. Navy (Retired), whose dedicated and exceptional career is cherished by everyone who knew of his extraordinary

courage, legendary reputation, and selfless service.

Last summer, as I prepared for the 50th anniversary of the commemoration of V-J Day and the end of the war in the Pacific, I had the honor and privilege of having dinner with Admiral Burke. I benefited then from his wise counsel, as had previous Presidents before me. Courageous and gallant, he was renowned for his heroism and leadership during the Pacific battles of World War II, from Cape St. George and the Solomon Sea to Leyte Gulf and Okinawa. During his 6-year tenure as Chief of Naval Operations in the pivotal years of the cold war, Admiral Burke's vision ensured a balanced and versatile Navy to help deter world war and respond to whatever crises might come. The U.S. Navy, in naming one of its most powerful class of surface ships after "31-Knot Burke," has ensured that his name will ride the seas as a reminder in the coming century of an indomitable destroyerman and naval leader who stood for freedom and the excellence needed to defend it.

To Admiral Burke's wife of 72 years, Roberta, his family and friends, and to the Navy community, I extend my heartfelt condolences. We will remember him as one of America's finest sailors and most capable military leaders.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Loan Guarantees to Israel

December 30, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed is an unclassified report on the Loan Guarantees to Israel Program and on economic conditions in Israel, as required by section 226(k) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (Public Law 87-195), and section 1205 of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-983).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 30, 1995.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 2, 1996.